

HOW TO BUILD CUSTOMER LOYALTY

PURPOSE: This operational guide is provided to all Air Force club management personnel to help build customer loyalty.

SCOPE: This guide applies to all club management personnel.

GENERAL: Just because a customer buys your product or uses your service doesn't mean they will come back. In clubs our customers, for the most part, are members so our customer represents a continuous revenue stream, not a one-time purchase. You must build a loyal customer base not merely a satisfied customer.

GUIDANCE: Knowing the facts should motivate us to develop a plan to build loyal customers. Here are a few innovative ways to improve customer loyalty:

1. **Talk to your front line employees:** Find out what is going on by talking to your staff. Most of the time they know what the problems are and the solutions.
2. **Collect e-mail addresses:** Send periodic updates on club happenings, dining room specialties, and updates to your members by e-mail. Don't overload the information chain, updates weekly will keep you membership well informed of upcoming events.
3. **Know your competition:** What you don't know can hurt you and your business. Talk to your competitors and their patron's. What specials are they running? How often? Price range? Service time? Ask questions that help you understand why the customer's are other than in your club.
4. **Learn from your competitor's:** Steal ideas that are successful and that you can use successfully within your club. Successful promotions and programs are usually spin-offs of someone else's idea. For example, look at the pizza delivery service. After Dominoes started delivery service, every other pizza chain followed suit.
5. **Focus groups and surveys:** Listen to what your membership is saying or asking for. If feasible, provide those services. Always answer comment card within a specified period of time (normally within 48 hours).
6. **Anniversary and birthdays:** The Air Force club card software program can provide pertinent information about each of your members. For member special occasions, such as birthdays and anniversaries, management should send a personalized card inviting them to the club to celebrate the occasion.
7. **Be creative:** Club membership loves trends and the zany. Running the same special and promotions will decrease customer participation. Management needs to keep the membership entertained with new and exciting programs. Be innovative!!

SUMMARY: Treat your employees the way you want your customers treated. The front-line person is the most important person in your organization. If they feel management cares about them, they will reflect the same respect to your customers. Remember that your employees are your (management's) internal customers.